

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 8 without prejudice.

In accordance with the Revised Rules under 37 C.F.R. 1.121, please amend the claims as shown below and indicated as "currently amended." Also shown below are claims that may be original, cancelled, withdrawn, previously presented, new, and not entered.

1. (currently amended) An aeration tine device attached to a soil aerator, comprising:

a tubular tine member extending along an axial direction thereof between a lower end portion and an upper end portion and having a lower opening bored at a center of a lower end surface, and a ~~long~~ side ejection opening in communication with the lower opening, the lower end surface ~~being~~ extending in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction; ~~and~~

~~a hard metal tip made of a hard metal material~~ having a tapered distal end portion formed with a tip opening and a proximal end portion formed with a proximal opening bored at a center of a proximal end surface in communication with the tip opening, the proximal end surface extending in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction and coupling in an area in contact with the lower end surface of the tubular tine member; and

a ring-like metal foil insert between the lower end surface of the tubular tine member and the proximal end surface of the metal tip in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction of the tine member for connecting the tubular tine member with the metal tip by brazing.

2. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the proximal end surface has an outer diameter substantially equal to an outer diameter of the lower end portion of the tubular tine member.

3. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hard~~ metal tip has the diameter of the tip opening ~~whose diameter~~ is narrower than the diameter of the proximal opening.

4. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hard~~ metal tip has a frustum portion of a cone shape located on a lower side and a cylindrical portion located on an upper side.

5. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hard~~ metal tip and the tubular tine member are connected with each other by brazing.

6. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hard~~ metal tip is essentially made of tungsten carbide, titanium carbide, or cermet.

7. (original) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the tubular tine member is essentially made of carbon steel, alloy steel, stainless steel, or any combination of those steels.

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 1, wherein the metal foil insert ~~insertion~~ is essentially made of copper, and wherein the ~~hard~~ metal tip and the tubular tine member are connected by silver brazing.

10. (currently amended) An aeration tine device attached to a soil aerator, comprising: a tubular tine member extending along an axial direction thereof between a lower end portion and an upper end portion and having a lower opening bored at a center of a lower end surface, and a ~~long~~ side ejection opening in communication with the lower opening, the lower end surface ~~being~~ extending in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction; the ~~long~~ side ejection

opening having a back slope formed in a united body with the tubular tine member rising in a curving manner from an inner ~~inter~~ surface of the tubular tine member; and

a hard metal tip ~~made of a hard metal material~~ having a tapered distal end portion formed with a tip opening and a proximal end portion formed with a proximal opening bored at a center of a proximal end surface in communication with the tip opening, the proximal end surface extending in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction and coupling in an area in contact with the lower end surface of the tubular tine member; and

a ring-like metal foil insert placed between the lower end surface of the tubular tine member and the proximal end surface of the metal tip in a plane perpendicular to the axial direction of the tine member for connecting the tubular tine member with the metal tip by brazing.

11. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 10, wherein an ~~the~~ inner surface extends ~~is extending~~ in a cylindrical shape and the back slope rises ~~is rising~~ from a portion of the inner surface opposite to the ~~long~~ side ejection opening with an angle of 20 to 40 degrees.

12. (currently amended) The aeration tine device according to claim 10, wherein the inner surface extends ~~is extending~~ in a cylindrical shape and is ~~made~~ wider as coming close to ~~toward~~ the ~~long~~ side ejection opening.